

MY POOR WIFE.

BY J. P. SMITH.

CHAPTER XVII.—(Continued.)

As she looked the prayer for help died on her lips, the tumult in her heart ceased, and she knew Edith's husband was at that moment as safe from molestation from her as if already ten thousand miles of water flowed between them.

She watched him passing out, followed by his family, then rose with a bewildered gesture, scarcely knowing where she was.

"Oh! Can you tell me, please, if my maid has returned? No? If she does will you tell her the box has been found, and we—" Then the maid appearing, she went on, "Oh, here you are! The box has turned up and we are ready to start at last.

"Mr. Dennys, madam, has gone on foot—he said it was such a fine night he would like the walk across the fields."

"Fine night! Why, it is raining hard and blowing almost a gale. Extraordinary ideal!"

At last the station was clear of Mrs. Dennys, her nursery, maids and footmen; and Helen, unable to bear the air of the room where so many emotions had been crowded, went out to breathe in the gale.

She hurried along heedless of where she was going, her cumbersome bonnet swinging in her hand, her cloak flying out behind her like a great black wing.

Was she glad or sorry, relieved or disappointed? Had she ever loved him at all, even in those sunny days before she had heard Edith's name? If she had lived out her life in peace by his side, if he had never wanted to desert her, never cared for another, would she in time have come to feel towards him as she had felt at that moment? Would he have fallen by degrees from the pedestal on which she had placed him, or would he have always remained enthroned in her foolish infatuated eyes?

These and a hundred other questions she asked herself vainly, as she hurried through the storm; but she could find no answer, her mind was racked for the moment, the only feeling clear to her was a sense of self-pity and contentment for the years she had wasted in futile anguish.

Even now the tempter whispered, was it too late? After all she was only twenty-six—years of youth lay before her if she wished. Why not coax fire and life back to her dimmed eyes, paint her pale cheeks, let her dark hair grow, and taste pleasure after her long fast therefrom? Why not bring men to her feet, shallow faithless men, as she had done before—make other wives weep as she had wept? Surely she had endured enough already; was there sense in donning sackcloth and ashes to the end, denying herself constantly, living in the midst of misery, disease and death, when she had been no wilful sinner, but one who had been sinned against from the beginning?

Thus cynically musing, she leaned over the bridge under which she had once passed, fighting unconsciously for the life she had longed to destroy, and peered into the dark water.

"What a fool I was—what a wild mad fool," she laughed bitterly; "and my mother before me! Only there was no turning back for you, poor mother—no turning back for you!"

With a shudder she passed aimlessly on, her short hair blowing about her face, and went into the churchyard again. She paused among the weeds; then, turning down the side path that led to the cross, the moon shone full for a moment upon the dreary spot, and she distinctly saw the figure of a man stretched face downwards on her grave, and that man was Edith's husband.

With a stifled scream, her hands instinctively flying to her face, she started back, and Paul, looking up, saw her. She heard his voice upraised in a loud cry—a cry that went to her heart like a knife and sent every nerve in her body quivering with a fierce pain of old, which she had believed stilled forever; and a second's scared inaction and the next she was across the churchyard, flying as if for her life.

Soon she heard his voice, then footsteps following eagerly. Redoubling her speed she struggled on, knocking

against headstones and cypresses, stumbling over the low grassy mounds that covered the nameless dead, longing for some grave to open and engulf her, for the suffocating waters to close round her again and bear her out of reach of him, whom she, alas, still loved better than her own life or her eternal welfare, whose peace, home, happiness she was about to destroy forever.

Her breath came in panting gasps, the ground surged under her feet. Nearer and nearer came the pursuing sounds, and clearer the entreating voice. Unless the moon would slip behind that bank of heavy cloud, towards which it was traveling, oh, so slowly, and enable her to drop into the ditch that lined the churchyard in three more strides, she felt that all was lost, the purpose of her seven years' struggle in vain—in vain—oh, worse than a thousand times in vain, she knew!

It was. She never reached the sheltering ditch, his hand fell heavily upon her shoulder, and, with a moan of despair, the poor soul dropped to the ground and lay at his feet cowering and whimpering in the wet grass like a frightened child.

After a short silent struggle he lifted her up and plucked her hands from her face.

"It is you—you!" he cried. "Helen, my wife, oh heaven!"

The moon just grazing the murky mass of vapor, covered them in her wan white glare. Helen, numb with horror, looked at him whom a short half hour before she had seen in the bloom of prosperous comely prime, now changed—changed into a haggard, storm-beaten aged man, with dimmed heavy eyes, worn wistful face, and hair plentifully sprinkled with grey, robbed of youth, health, hope, peace, by that moment's glance at her.

At this piteous sight love rose in arms, quickened her fainting soul, and roused her numbed limbs to resistance. She struggled and shook him off fiercely.

"Who—who are you? How dare you—you touch me? What do you mean? Are you—you mad or—tipsy, to assault a harmless stranger like that? I—I—"

"Helen, Helen," he exclaimed, in a sighing whisper—"oh Helen!"

She stammered, stopped, swayed irresolutely, then burst out violently—"Helen! Why do you call me that? I—I am not Helen. She—she was drowned seven years ago in that water. You know it—you know it as well as I. You must be—must be mad! Oh, go back—go back, I tell you, to your wife, your children, your home—go, let me depart."

"I have no home, no children, no wife but you."

His arms were round her, pinioning her tightly to her side, his hot breath fanning her face.

"Liar!" she panted, pushing his lips from hers. "Liar! I saw you, not an hour ago, at the station with her, your children in your arms—I heard you—"

"You saw my brother, Arthur, with his children and wife, to whom he has been married for the last ten years—not me. Helen, my wife, love of my life, how could you treat me so—how?" he asked, tears choking his voice.

"Your brother, Arthur, and his wife—not you—not you!" she murmured dizzily, and closed her eyes. "I think—I think—I knew it all along. Oh, I think I knew it wasn't you!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

He took her to a little quiet village within sound of the sea, she loved so well, and then by strict medical injunctions kept from her all subjects likely to disturb or agitate her mind. It was no difficult task; she never once alluded to the past, or showed any anxiety to learn the history of the seven years they had spent apart—a blissful lethargy came over her, and the mere fact of living, of being together again, was sufficient for her. She wanted no explanation, no mutual confession, no explanation, no mutual confession, no cursing back into the land of trouble and sorrow she had left. But it was different with him. Jealousy even in the supreme moment of his happiness was already gnawing at his heart and he knew he could not live with her in peace and let those seven years sleep.

One day, about a week after their reunion, she was well enough to take a little turn on the shore; the soft salt breeze blowing in her face brought there a tinge of returning health and youth that tempted him to make an effort to recall the past. She looked at him with mournful eyes, then said with peevish pathos—

"What—can you not let me be, Paul? I am alive and happy now—why drag me back to death and torment? I want to forget it all—"

"And so do I," he answered eagerly; "but I cannot, I cannot, my wife, if you will not speak. Men are different from women, and, if I do not know how and where you spent those seven years, they will poison my peace until the day I die. Tell me now, and I will forget them, put them from me after this hour, no matter what—what you tell me."

She sighed restlessly, then spoke.

"So be it. The first three years after I left home. I—I spent, Paul, in—in a—" She stopped, her eyes fell, she slipped her little wasted hand wistfully into his.

"Go on," he said hoarsely. "You—you have begun; I must hear all now. You spent in a—" "Lunatic asylum, a pauper lunatic asylum outside London."

"My darling! Oh, my poor darling!" he cried, covering her hand with kisses, in a burst of compassion and relief. "Our—our little son was born there," she continued softly, after a slight pause, "and after a few weeks of life went peacefully to Heaven. He—he was a nice little child, they told me. Paul, with fair hair like yours, and very dark eyes. I—I don't remember him at all; but they kept me this lock of his hair; it's pretty and soft, isn't it? Poor little mite! I never gave him a thought or a tear; he was as well without, I dare say."

"The night you left me you went straight to—the asylum?" he prompted, after a long pause, during which they had sat with trembling hands close clasped.

"No, no, to the river—to the river," she answered quickly and feverishly, a bright spot burning on her cheek. "I was mad, you know, quite—quite mad, though I knew what I—I was trying to do, and remembered it afterwards. You got my letter? You heard about my poor mother, how I deceived you—how they all deceived you—yes? She paused to take breath, then went on quickly as if she were repeating a lesson she loathed, but was forced to say—

"I wanted to kill myself and end it all—I saw no harm. I jumped off the first bridge above the churchyard where the water was deep, and the weight of my clothes kept me under until I was half-drowned; then nature asserted itself. I could swim, you know, in the wildest seas, and, no longer able to bear the agony of suffocation even in my madness, I struck out for the bank, and then I suppose—for I remember nothing clearly after that—wandered aimlessly across the country all night and next day. I was taken up as a homeless vagrant, lodged in a poor-house, and thence sent to the asylum, where after a couple of years memory by degrees came back to me."

(To be Continued.)

"COLD" ICE HIS SPECIALTY.

Peccoliar Cry Adopted by an Itinerant Vendor of Chicago.

From Chicago Democrat: "It is queer what devils men will resort to in order to sell their wares," said a well known man about town yesterday. "Advertising is quite a science these days, but a friend of mine from the south side tells a good yarn of an ice dealer. This dealer was one of those wanderers who have a few pounds of ice in a spring wagon and who have no regular customers. They haunt the alleys on hot days lawling their wares after the 'regulars' have made their rounds. They pick up quite a few nickels in the course of a day. It was one of the hottest days of the late fall, a Sunday, and the regular wagons had long since retired for the day. My friend was about half out of ice and placed his fate in the hands of the peripatetic. He was on watch to nail the first one who came along. He has a keen sense of fun and enjoyed the sport. Finally, when he had about given up, he heard the long and eagerly wished-for cry. An ice man was progressing down the alley. My friend went forth, waited and was rewarded. The dealer was a colored man who was earnestly appealing for all to buy. 'Ice!' he bawled, looking about as his nag moved slowly along. 'Ice, cold ice!' 'What kind of ice is that?' asked my friend, dubiously. 'Cold ice, sir; it's the coldest in town.' 'Well, I'd take some if I wasn't afraid the heat would spoil it,' was the retort, as my friend turned to re-enter the house. The colored man looked after him in amazement, but made no reply. He proceeded on his rounds, but changed his cry, for he seemed to fear the coldness would prove a hoodoo instead of a blessing."

Plants Killed by Heat.

The ordinary furnace-heated house is a bad place in which to grow plants. The air seems to have had all the dampness removed, and that moist condition so conducive to a good growth in plants is not found. This may in a measure be overcome by means of evaporation, which, while not supplying a great amount of moisture, should do something toward relieving the bad condition of the atmosphere. Place jars or pans of water in, around or about the furnace, hang buckets of water down inside the furnace pipes, below the registers, or place them anywhere that rapid evaporation may be induced. Keep all the plants in light, airy locations, but away from drafts. Never consign a well-grown specimen to a corner of the room, though it may look better there. Its beautiful appearance will last a short time only in the dark, close place. It may seem strange to some, but the very best place in the house, if the temperature can there be maintained at an even point, is the kitchen, because of the constant evaporation of the water as it puffs forth from the spout of the tea as it puffs forth from the mouth of the teakettle.

Bravery.

Watts—I noticed a photograph of a wildcat not long ago, taken just when the beast was about to spring at the photographer. Potts—That is nothing. Peck has a snapshot he took of his wife as she was coming at him with a kettle of hot water.—Indianapolis Journal.

LAWMAKERS BEGIN.

NEBRASKA LEGISLATURE IS ORGANIZED.

Republicans in Control of Both Branches—Senator Talbot of Lincoln President Protem—Clark of Lancaster Chosen Speaker of the House.

An hour before the hour fixed for opening the house of representatives was the mecca of a pilgrimage of members, visitors and sightseers from this city to the state house. The gallery was soon filled up and the lobby back of the railing was occupied by an equally anxious throng, as if in anticipation of witnessing something exciting.

The session up till 12:30 p. m. was without incidents and the preliminary work of organization resulted in the selection of Hugh A. Meyers, republican, of Douglas, as temporary speaker and John Wahl of Valley, republican, as temporary chief clerk.

At 12 o'clock noon the state legislature was called to order by Secretary of State W. F. Porter. The roll was called by Eric Johnson, showing 99 members present. Secretary Porter declared the result and at the dropping of the gavel the convention arose and Rev. Seabrook invoked the divine benedictions upon the organization in the interest of that which we all love, our commonwealth.

Prince of Hall placed in nomination Hugh Meyer, republican, of Douglas, as temporary speaker. C. R. Morrison, fusion, of Thayer, was named and a ballot taken.

The result of the ballot after verification, was Meyers 52, Morrison 48, strict party vote, except that the two candidates exchanged courtesies of voting for each other.

Secretary Porter introduced M. Meyers. Before leaving the chair he expressed the thanks of himself and the legislature for the gavel presented by Prof. Dawes of the dead legislature.

John Wahl of Valley was nominated and elected by acclamation as temporary chief clerk.

Committee on credentials was named and Weaver of Richardson moved that at the calling of the roll the members go forward and deposit their certificates of election with the credentials committee.

The committee on credentials reported the list of credited members who furnished certificates of election and the report was adopted.

A committee was then appointed to wait upon Chief Justice Harrison of the supreme court to administer the oath of office. The chief justice read the oath in its usual form, wherein the members swear to support the constitution, to do their duty, and not accept any individual or corporate favor from any individual or corporation. The members rose to their feet, held aloft their right hands, while a profound silence prevailed in the hall.

The members then came forward at the call of their names and affixed their signatures to the oath, a long and tedious process, during which Detweiler of Douglas suggested that the formality be dispensed with until some expeditious time.

An effort was made to adjourn for dinner, but a vote showed that the body was not in a humor to adjourn.

A committee from the senate with Senator Steel as spokesman reported the senate organized at 1:30 p. m.

The contest over the speakership was decided before the legislature convened consequent to the election of Paul F. Clark of Lancaster was purely perfunctory. Pollard of Cass named Clark, and Grover of Hamilton in a neat speech, nominated C. F. Wheeler of Furnas on behalf of the minority. The result, after an error of the clerk was corrected, was a division on party lines, 52 to 48.

Paul Clark was escorted to the chair and thanked the legislature for the nomination which had been made unanimous on motion of Weaver. He said that all parties would be treated with fairness. He was glad that the legislature was republican, and that the senator would be, in harmony with the national administration.

Weaver of Richardson stated that the formality of the minority nominations for minor offices would be dispensed with, and Detweiler of Douglas read the caucus nominees of the republicans who were elected as follows: Chief clerk—John Wahl of Valley. First assistant clerk—A. D. Gilmore, Nemaha.

Second assistant clerk—J. O. Berkeley of Brown.

Third assistant—R. H. Langford of Lincoln.

Postmaster—L. Cornell of Washington.

Sergeant at arms—Donald McLeary of Colfax.

Assistant sergeant at arms—Charles Cramer of Cass.

Chaplain—Rev. J. W. Seabrook of Nuckolls.

Door keeper—Charles Carpenter of Washington.

Assistant door keeper—F. L. Miller of Jefferson.

Engrossing clerk—William Wheeler. The house then adjourned till tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock.

SUICIDED BY SHOOTING.

Omaha Domestic, Tired of Life, Takes Poison and then Shoots Himself.

The regular Saturday night tragedy at Omaha occurred at the home of Mrs. C. R. Patrick, where a domestic whose first name was Laura, and whose surname is unknown, shot herself through the heart with a revolver after having swallowed the contents of a bottle labelled laudanum. She had gone to her room to dress to accompany another domestic down town. As she did not come down when expected, search was made for her, and she was found on her bed, dead. She had evidently dressed herself for the tragedy, as she had donned a neat attire of black. She was about thirty-three years old, a good looking blonde, and talked of having a home in Kansas. A twin sister is in Omaha.

RIOT AMONG ICE PACKERS.

Night Shift at Memphis Thwarted by Strike and a Fight Follows.

An extensive riot broke out at the Armour ice plant at Memphis Monday morning which developed into a great fight. Two or three days before sixty or seventy laborers were taken there from Omaha and put to work as a night gang. Monday morning they struck for higher wages, and when the day shift of men came on to work the strikers tried to persuade them to quit also. The day men refused to do so, whereupon the night force undertook to force them to quit. A general fight was indulged in and the night force was driven from the field. Quite a number on both sides are seriously hurt from wounds made by pike poles, although it is believed that none are dangerously injured.

Injured by Explosion.

Anton Peterson, an employe of Jacobson & Son at Hastings, Neb., was the victim of a gasoline explosion last Saturday morning that will probably cost him his life. Peterson had saturated some burrlapping, tied to the end of a wire, for the purpose of having out a pipe, but had failed to put a safe distance between himself and five gallons of gasoline before igniting it. The explosion threw the burning oil over Peterson, and in an instant he was enveloped in flames. Mr. Jacobson and C. H. Wanzler extinguished the fire by rolling the unfortunate man in heavy horse blankets, but not until his clothing had been burned off and great pieces of flesh dropped from his body. It is very doubtful if he can survive.

Will go to Paris.

W. B. Backus, principal of the Chardon schools, has received an appointment from the commissioner of Indian affairs to prepare an Indian school exhibit and take it to the Paris exposition. Mr. Backus had a school on exhibition at the World's Columbian exposition at Chicago, and his Paris venture will be on the same lines, but probably on a larger scale. He expects to secure about sixty educated Indians to take with him, and will have twelve assistants, experts in the matter of Indian schools.

Creighton Elevator Burns.

The elevator of W. H. Butterfield & Son at Creighton, burned Monday. Loss, \$4,500 with \$2,500 insurance. There was eighty-two hundred bushels of grain in the elevator, which was destroyed. While trying to save the new depot, H. A. Cheney, cashier of the Security bank, received painful, but not serious injuries. The fire started from a leak in the gasoline engine.

NUGGET OF NEBRASKA NEWS.

The Bank of Howe, incorporated October 24, 1898, opened for business January 2.

Ice dealers at Columbus are very busy putting up a good quality of ice from 13 to 16 inches thick.

Wymore Odd Fellows are now comfortably housed in their handsome new quarters in the Greenwood block.

Fremont business men met in mass meeting and entered a decided protest against an 1899 exposition at Omaha.

Mrs. Emily Stone, a well-known and highly respected Wahoo lady, died recently of lung and heart complications.

The home of Henry Stone, a packing house employe at Nebraska City was recently burned, entailing a loss of \$600.

Frank J. Wehrman, a prominent young business man of Nelson, died recently after a sickness of several months duration.

The amount of mortgages released in Gage county during the year 1898 exceeds the amount of mortgages filed for the same period by \$280,161.

Major Alfred C. Sharpe of Omaha, of the volunteer service, and captain in the 23d infantry, has been ordered to the department of Porto Rico for services as judge advocate of that department.

The new Methodist Episcopal church at Syracuse was dedicated last Sunday. The congregation is happy in the possession of their new edifice. Sister churches participated in the ceremonies.

Frank Israel, county judge of Dundly county, has resigned his office and will go to Lincoln to contest for a seat in the legislature to which he believes he was elected.

The Omaha Electric Lighting company have voluntarily reduced the price for electric lights from 20 cents per 1,000 watt hours to 15 cents per 1,000 watt hours.

The board of park commissioners for Omaha have decided to add thirty acres to the already wide domain of Riverview park, which lies south of the city, just on the bank of the river.

BANKS OF NEBRASKA

THEIR CONDITION ON DECEMBER 1.

Secretary Hall of the State Banking Board Makes His Report, Showing the Condition of State, Private and Savings Banks—Increased Loans.

Dr. Hall, secretary of the state banking board, has completed his annual report, showing the condition of state, private and savings banks of the state at the close of business December 1. The total number of banks reporting was 393. By comparison with the report made at the close of business July 14, 1898, the report shows an increase in loans and discounts of \$2,458,261.68; a decrease in cash reserve of \$177,726.43; an increase in deposits of \$555,948.60. The legal reserve July 14, 1898, was 50 per cent; legal reserve December 1, 1898, 60 per cent; a decrease of 13 per cent. The effect of Dr. Hall's report is as follows:

RESOURCES.

Table with 2 columns: Resource Category and Amount. Includes Loans and discounts, Overdrafts, State deposits, Due from national, state, and private banks and bankers, Banking house, furniture and fixtures, Other real estate, Current expenses and taxes paid, United States Bonds, Other liabilities, Cash items, Cash items not enumerated, Cash items, Cash reserve in banks.

LIABILITIES.

Table with 2 columns: Liability Category and Amount. Includes Capital stock, Surplus fund, Dividends unpaid, General deposits, Other liabilities, Notes and bills, Bills payable.

Tried to Burn Court House.

An attempt was made one last week by an unknown young man to burn Adams county's court house at Hastings, which had it not been soon discovered, might have resulted in the total destruction of the building. The janitor's son, who was in the boiler room, noticed a strange sneaking away from the boiler room and having his suspicions aroused by the fellow's actions, concluded to investigate. Arriving at the boiler room he found the zinc ventilator shut red hot, and the woodwork around it almost in flames. The shaft had been stuffed full of tar paper and toilet paper, which was burning fiercely. The authorities are looking for the man, who, it is supposed, is of a mental balance.

Hunter Loses a Hand.

The thirteen-year-old son of E. C. Satorff of Wymore met with an accident while out hunting on his father's farm, which resulted in the loss of his left hand. The boy, in attempting to cross a ditch, fell down and the muzzle of the gun became stopped with mud, which dried in the barrel. Some time later when the boy attempted to discharge the gun the barrel burst at the point where it was held by his left hand and that member was so badly fractured that it was found necessary to amputate the hand.

Becomes Insane.

Charles Deidrich of Nebraska City, veteran of the civil war, was recently found to be acting strangely and was placed in the county jail. An examination by the commissioners showed that he was insane. He is quite destructive and will have to be restrained to have any control of him. This is not the first time this man has been insane, as for years he had a guardian. He will be taken to Lincoln as soon as possible.

Injured by a Savage Boar.

Fred Nicholas of South Omaha, Nebraska, was seriously, possibly fatally injured by a boar. He had gone into the pen to clean it out when he was attacked, his clothing torn and several very bad cuts made by the animal's tusks in his back, thighs and sides. The full extent of his injuries are not yet fully determined.

Nebraska Soldiers.

Adjutant-General Barry last Friday received a telegram from Congressman Stark announcing that the 2d Nebraska soldiers on the way home from Manila had been discharged in order to reduce the regiment to the minimum. It is believed that the soldiers will be given transportation from San Francisco to Nebraska.

Charged With Counterfeiting.

James Burt, alias James McNamee, was taken to Grand Island from the southern part of the state and arraigned before Commissioner Gage on the charge of counterfeiting. He pleaded guilty and was bound over to the United States district court.

Lying in Wait for Him.

A man going home from his work at a late hour at night, walking through the occupants of a house standing flush with the street had left a window up, decided to warn them and prevent a burglary. Putting his head into the window he called out: "Hello! Good peep—" "That was all he said. A white peep of water struck him in the face, and as he staggered back a woman shrieked out: "Didn't I tell you what you'd get if you wasn't home by 9 o'clock?" Chicago Times.

Largest Cannon in the World.

The largest cannon in the world was taken by the British when India was conquered. The cannon was cast about the year 1500, and was the work of chief named Chuleby Koomy Khan, Ahmednager. The inside of the gun is fitted up with seats, and is a favorite place for British officers to go for quiet noon-day smoke.